



Charles Debrille Poston (1825-1902)

1991 Inductee from Mining's Past

Charles D. Poston was one of the first mineral entrepreneurs to explore the area of the Gadsden Purchase. In 1853, he came in search of the Planchas de Plata, the legendary native silver deposit that created the first miner's rush during the late 1700s into what would become Arizona. Poston didn't find his bonanza, but his efforts in promoting, financing, and developing the silver and copper mines of Southern Arizona in the Cerro Colorado and Santa Rita mining districts was the first sustained organized mining effort in Arizona.

His efforts focused the attention of many of the financiers and investors of the day on Arizona's resources. The principal result of Poston's efforts was the creation of a separate territory of Arizona from New Mexico territory, for which he became known as the "Father of Arizona."

Poston was Arizona Territory's first Superintendent of Indian Affairs and became its first delegate to the United States Congress. Although Poston never achieved the political prominence he sought and died a pauper in Phoenix, his passion for mining and his unflagging promotion of the potential of Arizona's mineral deposits were pivotal in bringing civilization to Arizona and the establishment of its mining industry.